II. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method ~~for accessing information in an intranet through a firewall~~ of dispatching an IP datagram comprising socks traffic on a socks server, in an Internet Protocol (IP) network comprising a plurality of socks servers, said method comprising the steps of:

in a socks dispatcher:

retrieving a value of a Type Of Service (TOS) field from ~~an~~ the IP header of ~~an~~ the IP datagram ~~that includes socks traffic on a socks server, in an Internet Protocol (IP) intranet network having a plurality of socks servers~~;

determining one or a plurality of socks servers defined for the value of the Type of Service (TOS) field retrieved from the IP datagram, one or a plurality of Type of Service (TOS) values being defined for each socks server;

determining an application level protocol of data transported in the IP datagram, the application level protocol being defined for each value of the Type of Service (TOS) field; and

if more than one socks server is defined for the value of the Type of Service (TOS) field retrieved from the IP datagram, forwarding the IP datagram to a socks server selected according to one or a plurality of selection parameters, one selection parameter being the application level protocol previously determined.

~~selecting a socks server solely on the basis of the retrieved TOS value.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 ~~wherein the selecting step includes assigning~~ comprising the further step of:

determining a priority ~~to~~ of the IP datagram, ~~based solely the retrieved TOS value~~ the priority being defined for each value of the Type of Service field.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 2 wherein ~~the selecting step uses the priority based solely on the retrieved TOS value to select the socks server~~ one selection parameter is the priority previously determined.

4. (Currently Amended) The method according to claims 1 or 2 ~~wherein in case of congestion in one or a plurality of output queues, said step of determining the priority of the IP datagram is followed by~~ comprising the further step[[s]] of:

~~discarding in said one or plurality of output queues IP datagrams having the lowest priority until there is no more congestion, and~~

~~discarding the IP datagram when said IP datagram compared with IP datagrams in said one or plurality of output queues, has the lowest priority~~

determining a capacity of the one or a plurality of socks servers defined for the value of the Type of Service (TOS) field retrieved from the IP datagram, a socks server capacity being defined for each socks server.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim[[s]] ~~1 or 2~~ 4 wherein ~~the~~ one selection parameter is capacity of the one or a plurality of socks servers. ~~step refers to a first table for each~~

~~sock server, each record in the first table having:~~

~~— an identifier , preferably an address,~~

~~— one or a plurality of TOS field values,~~

~~— optionally, a sock server capacity,~~

~~— optionally, application level protocols supported by the socks server.~~

6. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 5 wherein in case of congestion in one or a plurality of output queues, the step of determining the priority of the IP datagram is followed by ~~comprising the initial~~ the further steps of:

~~configuring the first table,~~

~~configuring a second table for assigning the priority to the IP datagram based solely on the retrieved TOS value, the second table having a priority and an application level protocol for each TOS value,~~

~~defining a default socks server for values of the Type Of Service (TOS) field not defined in the first table, and~~

~~defining a default priority and optionally a default application level protocol for values of the Type Of Service (TOS) field not defined in the second table.~~

discarding in the one or a plurality of output queues IP datagrams having a lowest priority until there is no more congestion;

discarding the IP datagram when the IP datagram compared with IP datagrams in the one or a plurality of output queues, has the lowest priority.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claims 1 or 2 wherein ~~the step of selecting a socks server refers to~~ a first table, said first table ~~defining for each value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field one or a plurality of socks servers, comprising the further steps of~~ comprises for each sock server:

~~determining the number of socks servers defined for the value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field retrieved from the IP datagram:~~

~~• if only one socks server is defined in the first table, forwarding the IP datagram to said socks server, and~~

~~• if more that one socks server is defined in the first table, forwarding the IP datagram to a socks server selected according to its capacity and the priority of the IP datagram.~~

an identifier, preferably an address;

one or a plurality of TOS field values;

optionally, a sock server capacity; and

optionally, application level protocols supported by the socks server.

8. (Previously Presented) A socks dispatcher comprising:

an IP intranet network comprising a plurality of socks servers, and

an IP datagram comprising an IP header, said IP header comprising aType of Service (TOS) field wherein said socks dispatcher

retrieves a value of said TOS field from the IP header of the IP datagram, and

selects a socks server based solely on the retrieved TOS field value by referring to a first table, said first table defining for each value of the TOS field, one or a plurality of socks servers.

9. (Previously Presented) A dispatcher according to claim 8 further comprising an IP network device wherein said IP datagram is sent by said IP network device with a given priority, and wherein said retrieving step is followed by a step of:

determining the priority of the IP datagram by referring to a second table, said second table defining a priority for each value of the Type of Service (TOS) field.

10. (Previously Presented) A computer program product on a computer readable medium having computer readable program code for dispatching an IP datagram comprising socks traffic on a socks server, in an Internet Protocol (IP) intranet network comprising a plurality of socks servers, said IP datagram comprising an IP header comprising a Type Of Service (TOS) field, said computer readable program code comprising the steps of:

in a socks dispatcher:

computer readable program code means for retrieving the value of a Type Of Service (TOS) field from the IP header of the IP datagram; and

computer readable program code means for selecting a socks server based solely on the retrieved TOS field value by referring to a first table, said first table defining for each value of the TOS field one or a plurality of socks servers.

11. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 10 wherein said IP datagram is sent by an IP network device with a given priority, and wherein said step of retrieving the value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field is followed by the further step of:

in the socks dispatcher:

computer readable program code means for determining the priority of the IP datagram by referring to a second table, said second table defining a priority for each value of the Type Of Service (TOS) field.

12. (New) The method according to claim 7 wherein a second table comprises for each value of the Type of Service field:

a priority; and

optionally, an application level protocol.

13. (New) The method according to claim 12 comprising the initial steps of:

configuring the first and second tables;

defining a default socks server for values of the Type of Service field not defined in the first table; and

defining a default priority and optionally a default application level protocol for values of the Type of Service (TOS) field not defined in the second table.